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An independent and locally owned newspaper 50¢

Palo Alto Weekly

Serving Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Atherton and surrounding communities

Class Guide Inside page 15

The ladies of the club

The Women's Club of Palo Alto looks to its past to help save its future.

Page 32

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Inside

Renee Fadiman

Palo Alto Women's Club members work hard to dispel the idea that members sit around and drink tea all day, although they do hope to preserve elegant traditions and incorporate them into their activities. See story on page 32.

NEWS

Community/Good grade for city hall

Residents mostly satisfied with local government, although Belle Haven, Willows have concerns. **Page 9**

Traffic/To stop or not to stop

Need for Bay Road stop sign is disputed, but Council rules it will stay for now. **Page 9**

Development/Subdivision showdown

Residents of Los Trancos Woods oppose plan to build 40 homes on site of Mariani Ranch. **Page 11**

FEATURES

Title Pages/Between two worlds

In his new book, Stanford resident fellow Jose Antonio Burciaga reflects on a life lived on the border of two cultures. **Page 37**

Arts/The landscape of his mind

Stanford artist Frank Lobdell speaks loud and clear in an exhibition covering 50 years of his work. **Page 41**

People/Meet Pola Harrel

The eyes and the hands are all that sculptor Pola Harrel needs to describe the range of human emotions. **Page 47**

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About the Cover

Palo Alto Women's Club members gather outside the clubhouse at Homer Avenue and Cowper Street. From left are Sarah French, Ella Vandervoort, Joyce Voorhies, Grace Bodley, Margaret "Boots" Gould, Dorothy Arbuckle and Diane Claerbout. Photograph by Renee Fadiman.

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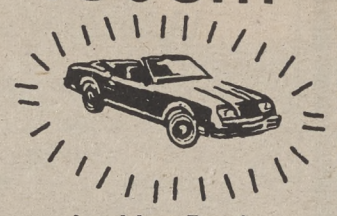

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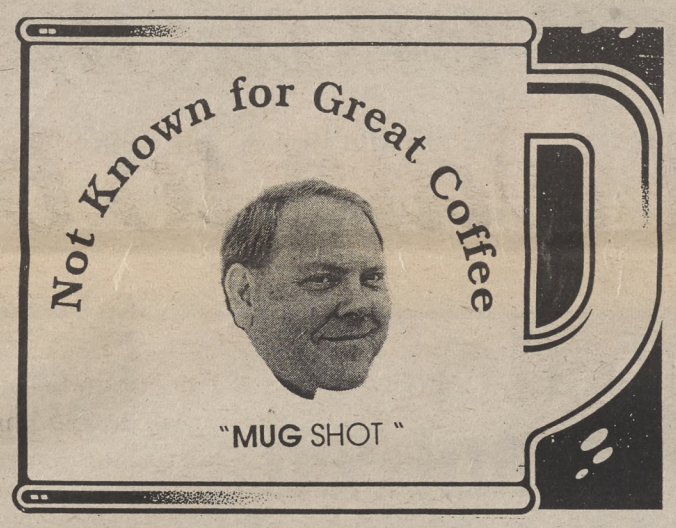

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Notes & Comments

by Diane Sussman

After the deluge

A few weeks ago, I did something I hadn't done in years.

I flushed.

After a Number One.

After only one Number One.

I placed my hand, trembling with anticipation, on the gizmo (having forgotten over the past seven years what the chrome thing is called) pressed down, and watched five gallons of water swirl clockwise down the toilet. It was a wonder to behold.

Then, eager to test other such long-forgotten behaviors, I ran the shower water and *did not collect the cold water in a bucket.*

The previous day, even before I read the announcement that drought officials have declared the drought a thing of the past, I had collected the warming water, the same way I always have for the past six years. But I began to suspect the drought was over when I spent the next 20 minutes carrying the bucket around the house looking for something—anything—that might need water.

"Can I interest you in a some water?" I asked the cats. "A large bowl, perhaps? How about a bucketfull?" I considered giving them a bath. Then I began to pine for my two goldfish, Jasper and Casper, whom I gave away a few years ago, principally to save water.

Having exhausted my resources inside the house, I went into the back yard. I went first to the compost pile. Usually dry as dust and starving for water, the compost was more pool than pile. I moved on, or I should say, waded on, in my gumboots to each of the plants. I had no better luck there. Most of the drought-tolerant plants and shrubs I planted last year (having ripped out all the grass on the advice of water experts) were sitting branch-deep in a bog. There was so much water I could have borrowed a few gallons from the bog to boil pasta or make tea.

Failing that, I went to the front yard, where one small patch of grass remains. The green paint someone sprayed on it had washed off and pooled under a tree, revealing bright green blades of unpainted grass underneath.

Even the bird bath, which I kept at a level more appropriate for bird foot baths, runneth over. I went inside and put the bucket of water next to the tub, where it remains.

Emboldened by all the pools and bogs, I retired my copy of "Cadillac Desert" and "20 Tips for Saving Water" so I could make room for the next wave of books that will undoubtedly be flooding the market soon. Books that will probably have titles like "Californians: Drought Not," "How to Water a Lawn," "Watching Grass Grow," "Cooking with Water."

And for the finale of this bold experiment in water use, I vowed to take a bath the next day, to sit in a tub of hot water—alone. Not with a friend, as the California Water Advisory Board used to suggest years ago. Not even with several friends, as I had feared we would have to do if the drought continued much longer.

I sank into the tub and felt a peculiar sensation, which I now realize was wetness. Within a few minutes, however, I felt another sensation—guilt. Let's face it, it isn't easy to eradicate seven years of California toilet training in a single flush.

I mean, for six years I have glowered at fellow swimmers who stand in the shower for 20 minutes, written nasty notes to my neighbor who waters her yard in the summer at high noon and instructed out-of-towners in drought etiquette.

Now I have no one to yell at. I'm not even sure if I'm entitled to a little righteous anger. In the past, if I read a story about how the evil people of Los Angeles drain and fill their swimming pools daily, wash their cars with running hoses and water their sidewalks, I used to call for the creation of two separate states. Or at least rant that we should cut off their supply and let them, and their swimming pools, slowly dehydrate.

But now what am I supposed to do? Think to myself, isn't it wonderful that those nice people in Los Angeles have such gleaming, immaculate cars and pristine, overflowing swimming pools? Truly, it's a credit to the image of our state.

And when I read stories about how Gov. Pete Wilson uses more water in a year than most of us use in several, I should just remember that times have changed, and that good landscaping is a sign of good government.

It is, after all, a brave new world. A wet, brave new world.

Someday I'll drink to that. ■

Diane Sussman is the Weekly's arts and entertainment editor.

How to reach the Weekly

We encourage our readers to call or write with comments, suggestions for stories and for general information. Office hours 8:30-5:30 Mon.-Fri.

By telephone

To reach a reporter, editor, display advertising, the publisher or the business office (the best days to call are Tues.-Thurs.).....326-8210
To place a classified ad.....326-8216
To send a fax (no press releases, please).....326-3928

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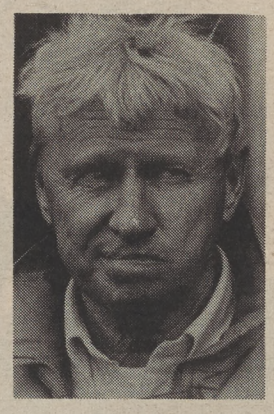
Streetwise

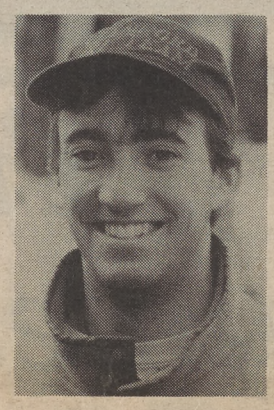
Questions and interviews by Carl Hubenthal. Photographs by Holly Peters.

Q: Now that the drought is over, should we stop water rationing?

(asked along Santa Cruz Avenue in Menlo Park)



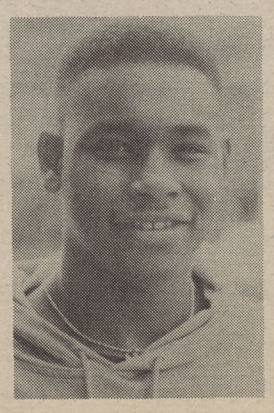
Ed Piatak
semi-retired
O'Keefe Street, Menlo Park
Yes, I think that everyone is sick of hearing about the drought and water rationing.



Brendan Kiernan
student
Rinconada House, Wilbur Hall, Stanford
No, it's like the energy crisis of the 70s; after it was over people went back to wasting energy. I think it will be the same with the drought.

Ramona Heinrich
housewife
Deer Springs Way, Los Altos Hills
I think everyone should be very, very careful. I'd like to see the rates go down. If the rationing stops, the rates might go down.

Rita Peterson
registered nurse
Evelyn Street, Menlo Park
It's probably not a good idea because I think there might be future problems with the drought. I think we can be less cautious with our water now.



Kenneth Bristow
student
Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park
No, rationing hasn't affected me that much and I have been living under it for five years. It's better to conserve now rather than to hurt in future droughts.

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Upfront

Local news, information and analysis

Around Town

FAMILY VALUES . . . Last week, the Palo Alto City Council made one of its most momentous decisions in quite some time. It decided to keep meeting at 7 p.m. rather than 7:30. Oh, the crowds were large and the debate was fierce, but finally, the Council decided getting out of their meeting half an hour earlier was worth the indigestion caused by rushing a meal. There were dissenters, notably **Mike Cobb**, who often shows up a few minutes late for the 7 p.m. meeting, mostly because he's a girl's softball coach. Then there was **Ron Andersen**, who pleaded that he doesn't get to see his wife on Monday and having that extra half an hour would allow them some quality family time at dinner. To which the divorced **Gary Fazzino** remarked that Monday really shouldn't be a make-or-break night for a marriage. You'd think Fazzino, a rabid sports fan, would be more sympathetic with Andersen, since a later starting time would allow him an extra half hour to watch Monday Night Football.

HOLD ONTO THE WATER . . . That's the theme of **Tom Slowik**, the landscape gardener who dabbled in politics by running, unsuccessfully, for Palo Alto City Council in 1991. Now Slowik is back in the fray, objecting to the idea of a heritage tree ordinance. In a one-page letter to the Council, Slowik managed to fit in his views about the Council being thoroughly corrupted by rich landlords, ridiculously high water rates and the "fact" that mature oak trees can use seven tons of water in one day. He suggests the Council consider a lawyer and lobbyist tax instead of high water rates.

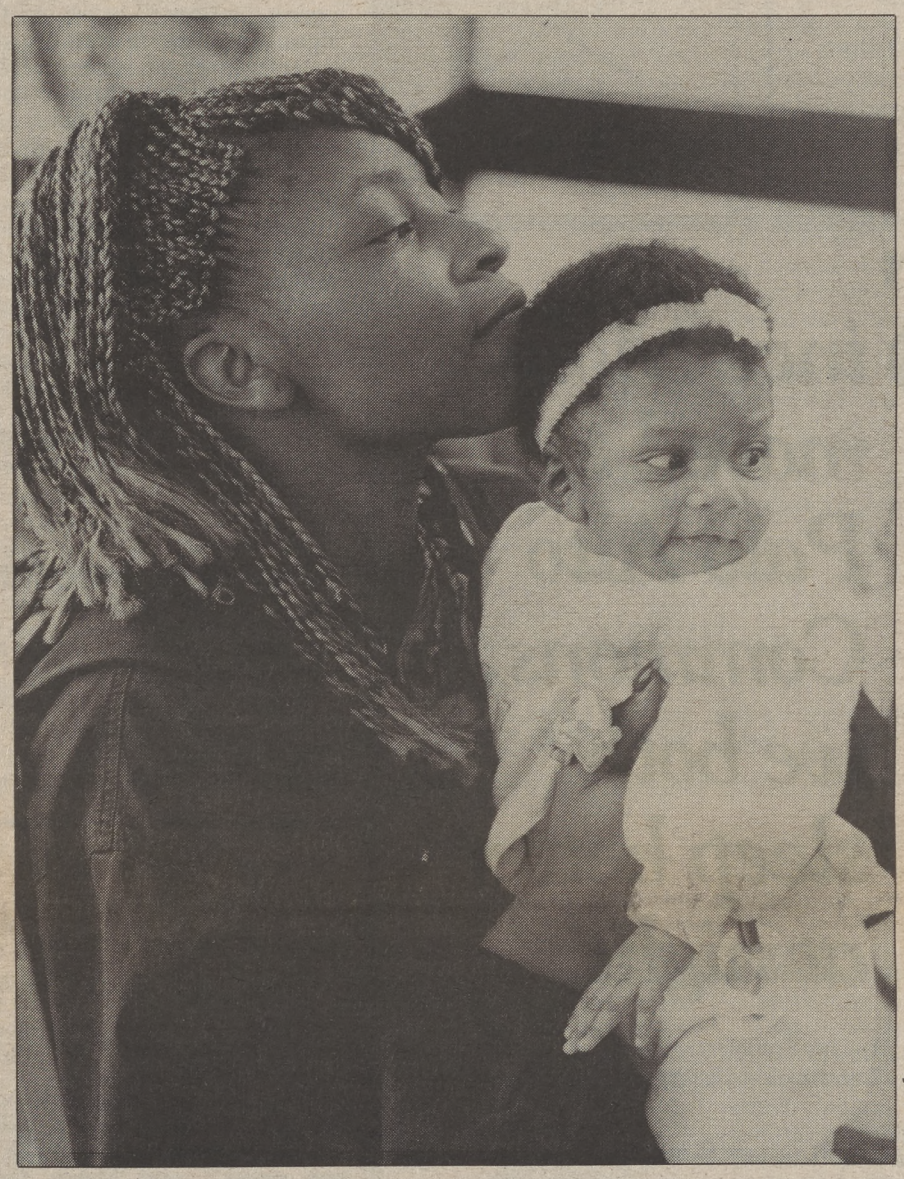
SPEAKING OF TREES . . . The awards will be handed out on April Fools Day, but this isn't a joke. The Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce and the Peninsula Times Tribune announced three winners of the 14th Annual Tall Tree Award. Attorney **Stephen Player**, president-elect of the Chamber, was named Outstanding Citizen for his participation in numerous community organizations. Outstanding Company Award was given to **Hobee's Restaurants** "for their civic-minded approach to doing business and their unwavering commitment to the Palo Alto community." Last but not least is **Sylvia Seman**, who stepped down last year after 20 years as executive director of the Palo Alto Housing Corp. Seman has since moved to Seattle with her new husband.

LUV-U-LOVIE . . . Each year, state Assembly member **Byron Sher** picks someone in his district as Woman of the Year to coincide with women's history month. East Palo Alto's **Lovie Lewis** has won this year's honors. She is vice president and co-founder of Bread of Life, a non-profit program to feed and clothe the needy and homeless.

Corrections

A news story last week erroneously stated that Nancy Couperus helped conduct a survey of downtown Menlo Park property owners. She was not part of that effort.

The Palo Alto Weekly desires to correct all significant errors. To request a correction, call Tom Gibboney, editor, at 326-8210 or write to P.O. Box 1610, Palo Alto, CA 94302.



Carolyn Clebsch

Prenatal advantage

Tosha Hayes holds her 3-month-old baby, Tiara, while listening to a discussion of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome at a meeting of Prenatal Advantage in East Palo Alto. The agency is teaching young African-American mothers to care for themselves and their babies in an effort to lower the rising infant mortality rate in San Mateo County. See story on page 13.

TRAFFIC

Stop signs on Bay Road to stay awhile

Neighbors, Council divided over attempt to slow traffic

by Don Kazak

The stop signs on Bay Road at Del Norte Avenue that have set neighbor against neighbor will remain for the time being, the Menlo Park City Council decided last week on a 3-2 vote.

The signs were installed Dec. 15 after a long lobbying effort by Wally Dean, a Bay Road resident.

But protests came almost immediately from a group of residents living closest to the corner. They argued that the decelerating and accelerating by cars, buses and

"It's really slowed the traffic down. We're trying to slow it down for the kids. That's the main thing."

—Wally Dean

trucks was much noisier than that made by vehicles before the signs were installed.

Several residents wrote letters to the Council urging the city to remove the signs. That prompted Dean and his neighbors to renew their efforts to keep the signs.

The Council agreed with Dean, but barely, with Vice Mayor Bob McNamara and Council member Cal Jones voting to remove the signs.

Instead, the signs will remain while the Transportation Commission and Don Dey, the city's transportation manager, try to work out a long-term compromise for the entire length of Bay Road between Marsh and Willow roads.

The long, uninterrupted stretch allows motorists to exceed the speed limit and use Bay Road as an alternative to the adjacent Bayshore Freeway, which is often

(continued on next page)

COMMUNITY

Residents satisfied with government

Belle Haven, Willows areas least content and most willing to pay for more services

by Don Kazak

Menlo Park residents may complain a lot to the City Council every Tuesday night, but on the whole, residents feel their city government is doing just fine.

That's the primary finding of the community telephone survey conducted in February.

The survey, believed to be the first the country where callers used a toll-free 800 number, included 90 questions and took about 20 minutes to complete. Despite some minor technical glitches, city officials say the effort went well and they are pleased by the results.

The responses to 55 of the 90 questions were tabulated in time for two town hall meetings the City Council held last week. The meetings divided residents into small groups to discuss issues raised in the survey and suggest ways to improve city services.

Crime and traffic continue to be the two key issues which worry residents the most.

On the whole, city staff members, including the police, received high marks from residents.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the favorable responses," said Police Chief Bruce Cumming. "I felt we were doing a pretty good job."

Cumming said he was not surprised by the results which showed that residents of the Belle Haven and Willows neighborhoods have concerns about safety on their streets at night. Those two neighborhoods expressed the most concern about current conditions. The two neighborhoods are adjacent to East Palo Alto and suffer from spillover crime, including random gunshots at night, from that city.

On a scale of one to six, Belle Haven respondents also averaged less than a three—minimal satisfaction—when asked about their views of police service in general. Belle Haven residents were also the only ones in the survey who registered a less than satisfactory response regarding the overall physical appearance of their neighborhood.

Belle Haven and Willows residents also scored the highest among nine neighborhoods in willingness to pay more for expanded police services.

About half of the respondents to the survey said they would be willing to pay a parcel tax to maintain current city services, while more than half would support a parcel tax for increased services.

"I'm a little disappointed that people aren't willing to pay more," said City Manager Jan Dolan. She added that survey respondents probably weren't aware that the city stands to lose substantial revenues this year because of the continuing state budget crisis.

Dolan added that she was "very reassured that citizens are satisfied

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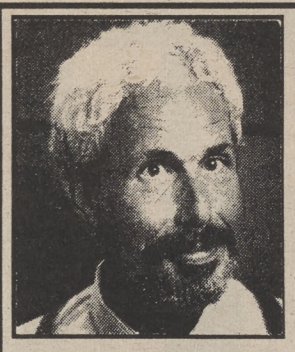

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Palo Alto Commons' resident, Lucy Strandhagen and her daughter Karen Ross

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Bay Road stop signs to stay

(continued from previous page)

congested in the morning and late afternoon peak commute hours. The road carries between 5,600 and 7,800 vehicles a day, with the great majority traveling between 38 and 43 miles per hour. The road is posted at 35 miles per hour for most of its length, and 30 elsewhere.

A group of 13 Bay Road and Del Norte residents signed a petition urging the Council to remove the signs. The petition included the statement that the residents "sincerely hope that these events, brought on by the selfishness of a few, will not deafen the ears of (the) City Council to legitimate concerns of Bay Road residents."

One resident, Eve Bielecki, wrote the Council that the location was inappropriate. "It is such a nuisance and serves no good purpose that I can see," she said. "In the 20 years I've lived in the neighborhood, I can rarely recall encountering a car exiting Del Norte."

But Wally Dean is satisfied that the stop signs will stay for now. "It's really slowed the traffic down," he said. "We're trying to slow it down for the kids. That's the main thing."

"I can rarely recall encountering a car exiting Del Norte."

At the same time, Dean recognized that the Del Norte stop signs may not be the best long-term solution.

Mayor Gail Slocum supported the effort to keep the signs and simultaneously work on a longer-term solution for Bay Road.

"The stop sign(s) can stay until we figure out how to correct what everyone says is the underlying problem—speeding cars on Bay Road," Slocum said.

Slocum was hopeful that the residents who have differed over the stop signs can come up with a solution they all agree with. "This gives them a chance to get to the table and negotiate," she said. ■

Residents satisfied with services

(continued from previous page)

with services, although there's always room for improvement."

Almost 2,500 people responded to the survey, with more than 1,500 answering all 90 questions. The answers to the remaining questions should be available this week or next, Dolan said.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the favorable responses."
—Bruce Cumming

"Two or three neighborhoods clearly have a lower level of satisfaction, primarily because of police and safety," said Mayor Gail Slocum. "But it's gratifying to see that this process has generated a lot of good ideas."

Slocum added that the survey results "pose an interesting problem" because of the suggestions that more city services are needed, coupled with a lack of a mandate to help pay for additional services.

The City Council is scheduled to mull over the survey results in an all-day goal-setting session March 27. Because of anticipated budget cuts as a result of the state's crisis, the session may involve real choices of what services to continue funding and what services to consider for increases.

In a related matter, the city also released summaries last week of eight neighborhood meetings held in Belle Haven between Jan. 27 and Feb. 17. Those meetings focused on crime and safety, education and job training, economic development, transportation, seniors and youth.

The chief conclusion of those meetings was a desire for more police patrols, more strict action against drug dealers, and an increased neighborhood watch program. Belle Haven residents also expressed a desire to spruce up their neighborhood by improving the appearance of local businesses, stronger enforcement of building codes and overnight parking restrictions, more job training programs and improvements at the Onetta Harris Community Center. ■

"I'm a little disappointed that people aren't willing to pay more."
—Jan Dolan

COUNCIL DIGEST

Menlo Park City Council

Tuesday, Feb. 23
City attorney: Voted 5-0 to appoint Bill McClure interim city attorney following the resignation of Jack Cosgrove
Diagonal parking: Voted 5-0 to revise an ordinance to allow diagonal parking
Downtown assessment district: Voted 5-0 to approve the negative declaration on the environmental review of the proposed downtown assessment district
Del Norte Avenue stop sign: Voted 3-2, Jones and McNamara opposed, to allow the sign to remain through its 90-day review period
Upcoming agendas
Note: Future agenda items are tentative. Readers should confirm the Monday before the meeting by calling the city clerk's office at 858-3380.
Tuesday, March 9: Formation of downtown assessment district for street improvements
Tuesday, March 16: Environmental review of proposed Willows neighborhood traffic plan
Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m.-noon: Special meeting of the informal mayor's forum, to be held in the city hall conference room

line with his withholding renters' tax rebates—just plain mean-spirited.

I notice that other agencies in the state continue to ask us to fund further acquisition of large preserves of unusable land at huge expense, but our recreational parks used by ordinary folks and families for outdoor fun and camping are being cut back. I say shame on you, Gov. Wilson.

Corrine Goldstick
3999 Middlefield Road
Palo Alto

Homophobic letters

Editor,

Two letters in your Feb. 24 issue were so clearly homophobic that I felt compelled to respond.

Vicki Riley of Portola Valley stated that homosexuals "want to initiate our children to aberrant sexual practices." As a gay man I find such a statement insulting. I and every one of my gay friends that I have discussed this with have absolutely no interest in trying to have someone become something they are not—unlike some heterosexuals who find it necessary to try and force gay people to become something they are not: heterosexual. To cite an example such as the Sea Scouts and imply that all gay people are like that is ludicrous. Certainly, you don't need to look too hard to find examples of offensive behavior by heterosexuals, yet no one implies that since one heterosexual did something offensive, all heterosexuals must be like that.

Ms. Riley also made a reference to the Man-Boy Love Association marching in the gay parade each year. What she doesn't mention (or perhaps doesn't know) is that their participation in the parade is very controversial within the gay community, since so many of us also find it offensive. Each year that I have seen them in the parade they are usually greeted by either dead silence or are heckled and booed. However, since most gay people are the victims of intense oppression by our society, we tend to be very reluctant to, in turn, become oppressors of something we don't understand or agree with.

Donald Smith of Atherton called homosexuality an "aberrant lifestyle." Again, I find this statement insulting. To me, a heterosexual lifestyle would be aberrant. I could not conceive of wanting to be in a heterosexual relationship any more than Mr. Smith wants to be in a homosexual relationship.

I have no argument with Mr. Smith's statement that casual sex caused most of the spread of AIDS within the gay community. However, he indicated that it was done "at the expense of the larger community health and expenditure." When most of the HIV infection was spread amongst gay men, it was done before it was clear what activity caused the HIV infection. Since it has been clearly defined what causes HIV infection, the spread of HIV in the gay community has dropped significantly since there has been an intensive educational program in place for several years to let gay men know how HIV is spread. Most gay men are responsible people who care for themselves, other people, and their community at large. Mr. Smith's comment appears to use AIDS as another opportunity to oppress and criticize the gay community.

Paul Schoemaker
165 E. O'Keefe St., #9
Menlo Park

Voice your opinion

Editor,

I wish to take issue with some of the statements attributed to Mr. Flegel, the spokesman for the Santa Cruz Avenue Improvement Project, in the article "Avenue upgrade supported" (Weekly, Feb. 24).

According to Mr. Flegel, those of us who are "raising questions" about the project design are circulating misconceptions—specifically, that no left turns from Santa Cruz Avenue will be allowed. This is patently untrue. Downtown merchants have keen informed about the project by a citizen-led effort headed by Evelyn Louthian, and downtown property owners have been informed about the project by letter and project map sent by the Citizens for Responsible Downtown Development, of which I am a member.

Neither group ever stated that left turns were being eliminated. This issue, at first unclear, had been clarified for us by the city's engineer, and merchants and owners were informed that the markings for left turn lanes were being eliminated—not left turns. This is clearly stated in the letter to the property owners. Mr. Flegel, it seems, is the one who is perhaps misinformed. Additionally, Mr. Flegel implies in the article that the yearlong trial run is equivalent to the proposed permanent installation. It is decidedly not.

Whether the seven proposed medians are perceived as obstacles to traffic flow or as beautiful additions to the downtown area is a subjective matter. Nevertheless, if the medians in combination with the stop signs and diagonal parking do end up constricting traffic flow and creating congestion, it will be the diagonal parking which will be removed rather than the medians—for the obvious reason of cost and ease of removal. The logic of diagonal parking is the one area in which there is almost universal agreement. To lose its benefits would be detrimental to downtown business interests. Given the choice of medians or diagonal parking, merchants will most assuredly choose parking.

Meritorious or not, this downtown project is costing over $400,000—only one-third of the cost is being borne by the property owners. A down-sized plan would reduce the cost substantially. Councilman Cal Jones has offered such an alternative.

On March 9, the City Council is holding a public meeting on this project. It is important, if you have concerns about the project (design, cost, etc.) that you attend and voice your opinions. It is only in this way that the Council can make an informed decision about a project that will affect the community and the pocketbook of the residents.

Nancy Couperus
859-869 Santa Cruz Ave.
Menlo Park

Let plan proceed

Editor,

The Menlo Park City Council has made a decision to move ahead with a good cost-sharing landscaping and traffic improvement plan for the business section of Santa Cruz Avenue, which will complement the 1977 improvements that were made with federal funds. This improvement was an effort to improve the appearance of the business street, and to make it more shopper-friendly. Some of the mature trees were saved, although now most have been taken out, so the street once again presents a very sterile image. It was the intent at the time to restrict through traffic and not to let it be a main traffic carrier, hence the closing off of Santa Cruz at the El Camino Real.

It appears that the proposed landscaping plan will make the street much more shopper-friendly and continue to restrict through traffic. It would seem that for the most part the shopper wants a soft-image type of atmosphere to shop in. This is evidenced by several of the updated centers around us.

Perhaps a minor improvement can be made to the plan, but the important thing is to proceed with the project and to give the downtown area an image befitting that of Menlo Park.

Ira Bonde
113 Princeton Road
Menlo Park

Evaluation needed

Editor,

We Santa Cruz Avenue merchants have concerns with the current proposed Downtown Beautification Project. Our customers have commented that if access, parking and visibility in Menlo Park are sacrificed for the tree medians, they will shop elsewhere. We are concerned that the trial median project was not empirically documented. Public data is not available which quantifies customer and merchant responses to the demonstration landscape project. There was no criteria designed to evaluate the effectiveness of this project. The final beautification plan dramatically differs from the trial project, both in scope of development and cost.

The Downtown Beautification Committee and the City of Menlo Park hope to change Santa Cruz Avenue permanently by installing seven median islands of sycamore trees with accompanying irrigation, drainage and lighting systems. This will necessitate a change in parking spaces and the elimination of designated left-hand turn lanes.

The city of Menlo Park will be holding a meeting March 9 and a hearing March 23, after which time an assessment district will be levied on downtown landlords. This will be the last time for the public, merchants, and landlords to question the merits of this project. The Central Business District Beautification Project will cost the city $314,257 and landlords and/or merchants $136,276 over a 10-year period.

High-caliber stores with attractive merchandise, courteous knowledgeable salespeople, service and fair prices have increased retail customer traffic on Santa Cruz Avenue. Moderate traffic flow, visibility, access to stores and ample parking are imperative to maintain a furniture and home furnishings shopping district. Clean streets, sidewalks, and well-maintained landscape enhance the shopping experience.

We Santa Cruz Avenue merchants do not want to rush into a costly downtown renovation without careful evaluation of the original trial project and consensus from the merchants and customers who will be impacted by these proposed "improvements."

If you care about your downtown and Santa Cruz Avenue, this is the last time to speak out. Write to the City Council, attend the March meetings, view the proposed plans at the city, library, or chamber offices, read the text, ask questions and voice your concerns. Thank you.

Lisa Williams
Bonnie Tomek
Abacus
628 Santa Cruz Ave.
June and Russell Labarre
The Furniture Lady
707 Santa Cruz Ave.
and 10 other
Santa Cruz Avenue merchants
Menlo Park

Board of Contributors

Just say no to guns

We need to consider new approaches in the war on drugs and violence

by Alan Henderson

It is imperative for us to consider new approaches to combat the ever-growing violence, crime and drug abuse problems in our society. In our immediate area, we are frustrated at our inability to protect East Palo Alto citizens from constant danger. Every night, our TV newscasters tell us about shootings, robberies and drug busts in the Bay Area. Travel to any part of the United States and you will find the nightly newscast leading off with a recital of violent events of the day.

In the past decade, we have tried everything from Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No To Drugs" campaign to spending billions of dollars on additional law enforcement efforts and on prisons. These measures are not succeeding. Our problems are twofold: The dependency on illegal drugs leading to desperate needs for money and the easy availability of guns.

The first needed change is to rebel against the pressures exerted by the National Rifle Association and get the handguns and military-style assault weapons out of circulation. Our inner cities have become war zones inhabited by snipers. Other industrialized nations effectively ban such weapons, while we can't even enact reasonable licensing and waiting period laws. Statistical differences between nations are dramatic. For example, more than 24,000 Americans die from handgun violence each year. In 1990, 22 people in Great Britain were killed by handguns. More than 135,000 students in our country carry handguns to school each day, and an additional 270,000 have carried a gun to school at least once.

Why do we condone virtually unregulated sales of easily concealable Saturday night special handguns? How can we possibly justify private ownership of semi-automatic assault weapons such as the Uzi and the AK-47? Why do we permit public sales of "banana clips" which hold 30-40 rounds of ammunition and "drum" magazines which hold 75-90 rounds?

More and more people are buying guns under the false premise that being armed is protection. According to a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine, a handgun purchased for home protection is 43 times more likely to be used to kill the owner, family member or friend than it is to be fired in self-defense.

If only licensed personnel such as police officers and security guards were permitted to carry weapons, the greatest instrument for dealing death in our country would be eliminated. As the NRA states, outlaw guns and only outlaws would carry guns. Precisely! Any unlicensed person carrying a gun would be subject to a mandatory penalty. Extra time would be added to the sentences of persons committing crimes with guns.

For those people whose chief joy in life comes from hunting and killing animals and birds, and for members of rifle clubs, guns and ammunition would be available on a carefully controlled basis at hunting and shooting sites.

An alternative to gun control, of course, is to permit gun ownership and make possession of ammunition illegal.

Although elimination of guns in our society would greatly reduce shooting deaths, injuries and accidents, this action would not eliminate the desperate needs of drug addicts. We should open our minds to at least discussing the pros and cons of legalizing drugs. Even such distinguished conservatives as former Secretary of State George Shultz and William Buckley have recommended such research.

Far more deaths in the United States result from smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol than from all illegal drugs combined. Yet those two activities are legal and don't give rise to crime in order to indulge in them.

In 1992, Great Britain legalized all drugs. People who have become dependent on drugs are treated like diabetics who require insulin. Doctors prescribe amounts sufficient to keep addicts functioning normally. The prescription costs are a small fraction of the former illegal street purchases. Dealers are eliminated. Users do not commit crimes in order to pay for illegal, high-cost purchases.

Billions of dollars of law enforcement and prison costs are saved with legalization. With just a fraction of these savings, huge education and rehabilitation programs could be financed.

Let us at least debate with open minds the facts and statistics of pro and con arguments on legalization. Then we can make a rational decision.

Alan Henderson is a former Palo Alto mayor and City Council member who serves on the boards of several community organizations. He is a member of the Weekly's Board of Contributors.

The members of the club, many of whom are in their 70s and 80s, love to socialize, play bridge, and laugh, like Frances Payne. The close-knit group takes care of each other in good times and bad.

by Elizabeth Darling
Photographs by Renee Fadiman

They were pioneer mothers and wives who had plenty to keep them busy, yet they came together to start one of the area's earliest welfare programs in the late 1890s. Instead of letting homeless men languish, they created the Friendly Woodyard, a place where those in need could find jobs or clothing.

This program was spearheaded not by the city government of Palo Alto, but by women who had not yet won the right to vote— members of the Women's Club of Palo Alto.

For some, the name might suggest teas and socials for an elite set far removed from the grittiness of daily life. But in its day this club, started by 25 charter members in 1894, had an activist spirit far ahead of its time. The women sought to effect social and civic change in their own community, often taking on projects no one else wanted.

It was support from the Women's Club that aided passage of a sewer bond to pay for replacing the city's old, poorly constructed cesspools.

And it was club members who successfully pushed to establish Palo Alto's first school in 1894. Soon after, the club took over the local reading room, and before long the groundwork was laid for the city's library system. Today members proudly note that women's clubs are responsible for establishing 75 percent of all libraries nationwide.

Fighting for temperance, the Women's Club of Palo Alto allied itself with Stanford University to protest a proposed saloon at the city's edge, and helped beautify the downtown streets by planting and watering trees.

"I like to think of the women's club as a forerunner to all these other organizations. Everything we're fighting for now the Women's Club was fighting for then. It's not an exaggeration that most of what happened in Palo Alto is because of what the Women's Club did," said Diane Claerbout, 50, a member who recently joined, partly because of her interest in the club's early years.

Claerbout is researching the club's history as part of an effort by the Women's Heritage Museum to create a walking tour booklet on famous women of Palo Alto.

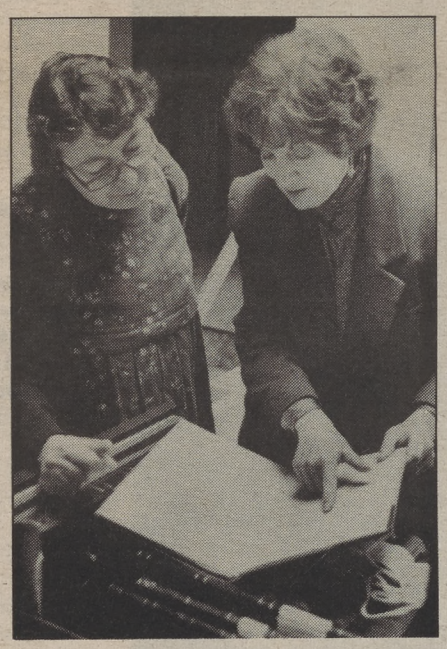
The Women's Club began as a series of "mothers' meetings" in 1894 to expose women to interests outside the home. Qualifications for membership were respectability and intelligence, and no politics or religion could be discussed. Members had to be residents of Palo Alto. The original mission of the club was self-improvement, mutual help and community work.

During both world wars, the Women's Club was heav-

The Ladies of the Club

The Women's Club of Palo Alto looks to its past to help save its future

A member of the Women's Club since 1959, Dorothy Arbuckle has been the club's president twice, and has done a great deal of research on its history. "I love every facet of it. It's been my life," she says. She hopes younger women will catch her enthusiasm and join the club.



Historians Jeanne McDonnell and Diane Claerbout are trying to research the history of the Women's Club.

Member Betty Bonn bows her head for the prayer that begins each meeting. Meetings also include entertainment and singing, traditions dating back to the club's founding.

ily involved, buying bonds, entertaining soldiers at Camp Fremont in Menlo Park and working at the Base hospital and at the Red Cross. In World War II, the club helped furnish a sun room at the local general hospital, collected musical instruments and records for wounded soldiers, and hosted Red Cross meetings and first aid classes.

In its early days, the population of Palo Alto was about 1,000, and there were 110 members of the Women's Club. Its membership grew until it had 300 members at its peak in the 1960s. Today, the population of Palo Alto has multiplied to more than 56,000, yet the Women's Club is almost a forgotten institution. Most people speed on by the stately cream and brown clubhouse at 475 Homer St. without giving it a second glance.

That property began with a dream in 1904, when the club was incorporated and members started a fund to acquire a lot. A plot of land was purchased at the corner of Homer Avenue and Cowper Street, although there were great misgivings because the location was so far out of town.

It was September 1916 when the group opened its brand-new clubhouse, which it built with proceeds from history and cookbook sales and an appearance by Helen Keller, which filled the largest hall in Palo Alto.

The stately Tudor-style house features a large ballroom, a recently modernized kitchen, and several other small meeting rooms. The comfortable, simple furnishings provide a homey but dignified atmosphere.

In the late 1980s, there was a move to sell the property, but it was voted down. Those who supported selling felt that the upkeep of the building took too much strength and energy, when the club could still exist in a rented space. Instead, the members decided to rent out the club for parties, weddings and other activities, which helped put the club back on stable financial footing. That revenue is what keeps the club going today.

With its financial house in order, the club's biggest challenge today is to rejuvenate its membership. Most of the 67 active participants are in their 70s and 80s now, although they still attend the twice-a-month meetings and get together at other times for parties or luncheons. They have stayed with the club through the tough times, and hope younger members will help its tradition continue.

Attending a club meeting today is like taking a pleasant journey back to a time of dignity and decorum. The stately club ballroom is large for the average meeting of about 16 women, but it is festively decorated with floral tablecloths and fresh flowers. The women typically have refreshments or lunch before they

(continued on next page)

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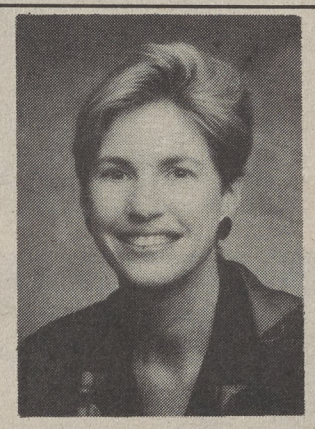

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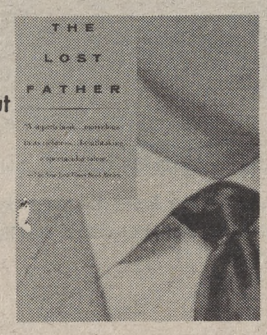
KEPLER'S PRESENTS

Peter Selz
MAX BECKMANN: THE SELF-PORTRAITS (Rizzoli)
Thursday March 4, 7:30 PM
Professor Selz, former curator of the Museum of Modern Art, New York will discuss the life and work of this expressionist painter who was labeled a "degenerate" by the Nazis. Beckmann's obsession with the self-portrait began when he was a 15-year-old art student. Gathered here are paintings and drawings produced by Beckmann between 1899 and 1950, the year he died. Joining Professor Selz tonight will be the painter Nathan Oliveira, who contributed the foreward to this book.

Mona Simpson
THE LOST FATHER (Vintage)
Monday March 8, 7:30 PM
Mona Simpson will read from *THE LOST FATHER*, an immensely powerful novel about love and lovelessness, fathers and fatherlessness, and the loyalties that shape us even when they threaten to destroy us. "Ratifies the achievement of *Anywhere But Here*, attesting to its author's dazzling literary gift and uncommon emotional wisdom." -New York Times Book Review



Diane Middlebrook
ANNE SEXTON: A BIOGRAPHY (Vintage)
Wednesday March 10, 7:30 PM
Professor Middlebrook will discuss her study of this multifaceted poet which was a finalist for the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and winner of the Bay Area Book Reviewers Award for biography.

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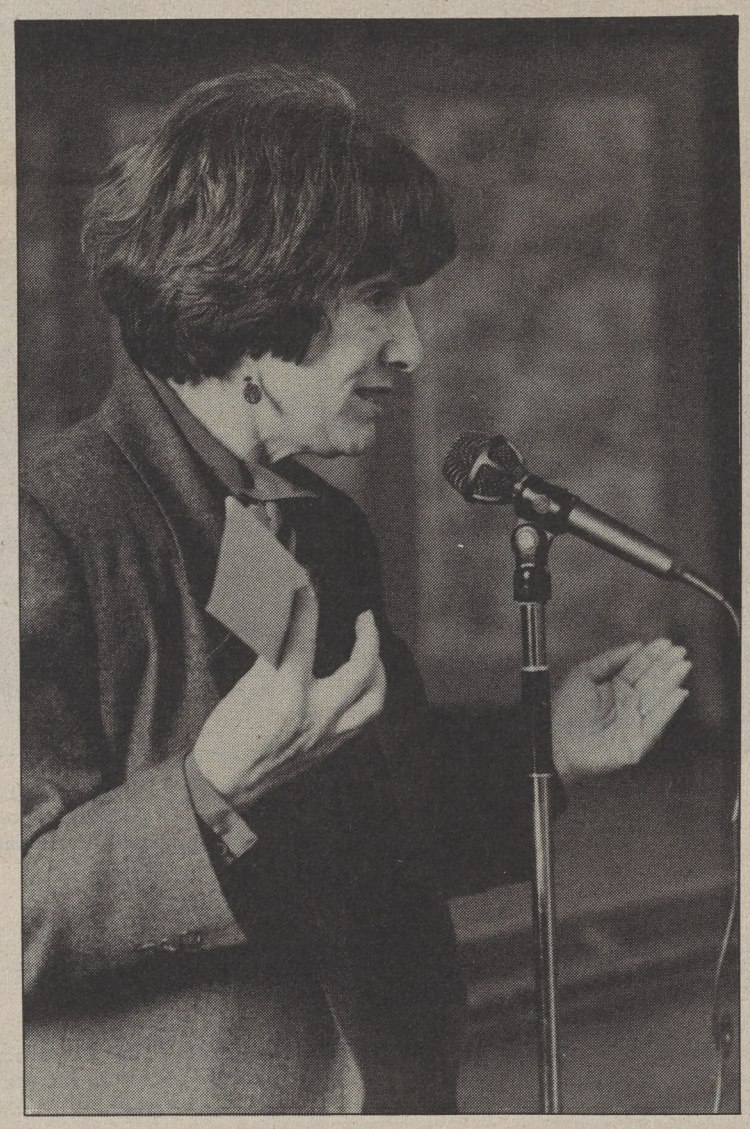

Above, at each meeting, club members say the pledge of allegiance. Nationwide, women's clubs are involved in lobbying for women's causes. In Washington, D.C., the General Federation of Women's Clubs is lobbying on Capitol Hill for women's health issues.

Left, "How do we know where we're going if we don't know where we've been?" asks Diane Claerbout, who just joined the club and is digging through the club's old minutes to trace its history.

Women's Club

(continued from previous page)

meet and then have entertainment, which at a recent meeting was a piano recital. The room is filled with friendliness, and it is clear that members of this close-knit group have a special bond with each other.

There is simple dignity about the whole thing, and while it may not excite younger people, there is something decidedly quaint and sweet about it. One member leads the group in singing "I Love You Truly," followed by "God Bless America," a prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance and a short business meeting.

The current president, Margaret Gould, a member of this club since 1988 and the San Jose Women's Club before it closed, hopes to bring back some of the elegant traditions, like serving tea from the silver tea service. "We're going to try and get it more like it used to be. At one time (in the 1960s) we had 300 members and a waiting list," she said.

However, the members do as much as they can to dispel the myth that all they do is sit around and

drink tea. Ann Holland, president of the Washington, D.C.-based General Federation of Women's Clubs, is emphatic: "They're always trying to get pictures of us in front of the teapot," she said of news photographers. "That isn't who we are."

The older members recall when the club was thriving in the 1950s and 60s.

"This was a busy place. We had at least 13 interests, including international relations. (We had) a sewing group, a gourmet cooking group, and 'chat and chew' for those who wanted to just come and talk. The fellowship of the women's club (has been) very important to me," said Dorothy Arbuckle, a member since 1959.

For Arbuckle, the club has been a place to find her identity and develop strong friendships.

"I love every facet of it. I have never had a job in this club that I don't enjoy to the fullest," she said. The club has been an integral part of her life. "When my husband died, you wouldn't believe how these friends gathered around. They take care of each other.

"It's been a salvation in my life. It's gotten me through deaths. The fellowship of the Women's Club was so very important to me. I've made lifelong friends."

Arbuckle remembers the Women's Club pitching in to take care of others during wartime or natural disasters. During the Korean War, club members filled 100 health kits with soap, toothbrushes and medicines donated by Syntex. After the Loma Prieta earthquake, they brought loads of blankets and supplies to Hollister.

"I don't want to talk about the past, though. I'd like to talk about the future," Arbuckle said, and she works hard at getting women interested in joining the club. For a long time, she said, "we felt slighted, but we understand that the young women have gone to work."

Ironically, the things the women's club, and others like it nationwide, have accomplished have slowly brought about its demise. With more and more women entering the workforce and attaining more and more outside the home, there are fewer and fewer who can attend the daytime meetings or devote time to club projects.

"Times changed drastically in the 1950s and 1960s," Holland said. From then until now, national membership in women's clubs has dropped from 800,000 to 350,000.

While aging membership and the inability to hold onto clubhouses cause many clubs to close, others throughout the country have managed to thrive. There are 8,500 clubs with 10 million members worldwide in 30 countries. Last year there were 38,000 new members.

Clubs in Arizona, Washington, Arkansas, Florida and Texas seem to be doing the best. In California, which has the largest membership contingent of any state, some of the state's 541 clubs are thriving, while others are struggling. Both the San Jose and East Palo Alto women's clubs have closed in recent years.

State president Pat Nix said the successful clubs are the ones in close-knit communities, where the club may be the only women's volunteer organization around. In urban areas, there are so many alternatives that women's clubs get lost in the shuffle.

What is the secret to survival?

"We do recognize that we must adapt to the working women and single parents," Holland said. "The clubs that have been successful have been able to adapt to that problem. We're trying very hard to interest college-age women." The federation's recruiting efforts target college towns like Palo Alto.

In Washington, D.C., the federation is lobbying for women's health issues on Capitol Hill, and also has a national literacy program for preschool children.

"Our strength really lies in our diversity of programs," Holland said. The club has six "departments," or areas of emphasis: conservation, home life, education, the arts, public affairs and international affairs. Different clubs may focus on different areas. In recent years, the Palo Alto club has chosen to spend much of its time doing charity work for veterans, the Red Cross and other service organizations.

In order to survive, the Palo Alto club is going to have to bridge the generation gap and bring back the activist spirit of the past.

Last year, the club finally began adding some younger members, most of them in their 40s and 50s. "It's perceived as old-fashioned by younger women. It's the kind of thing they've rejected," said new member Jeanne McDonnell. Yet the club was founded on the principles which younger women live by.

In the past, the club has often been rather modest and self-effacing, choosing not to market itself or play up its role in community service, but membership chair Beulah Hodges is hoping to change that.

"When I joined there were so many more members. I'm trying to have a drive on new members. We really need more advertising for the club," she said. "It's a chance to get together and a chance to get to know different people. As the club builds up it'll get more interesting. Any younger person or any older person would be very helpful.

"It's terrific to blend the older and the younger, because we all learn from it. My father told me when you get too old to learn, you're too old. It's an outlet. It gives me something to think about, something to do instead of becoming a couch potato."

Claerbout is one of the new members, and her passion is to discover the history of the women's club.

"We (the club) may be at a critical time now," she said, and learning the history of the club may be the key to saving it. "How do we know where we're going if we don't know where we've been?"

The Palo Alto club has received about 10 new members in the last year, including Margaret Feuer, who is also on the Peninsula Committee of the Women's Heritage Museum. She had ambivalent feelings about joining the club at first.

"To me it's the equivalent of the senior center," said the 49-year-old Feuer. But she also saw promise in the club, and what it could do for women.

"I'd like to see that they continue to exist. I would like to see it remain a women's center. (But) they're going to have to change their philosophy pretty radically in order to survive. When you bring in new members, you bring in new ideas, and new ideas mean change."■

No mutual admiration society

At the turn of the century, the Women's Club of Palo Alto had such a presence in the community that it was often expected to shape public policy and carry out service projects. It also strived to educate its members and raise their consciousness about the role of women in society.

The first meeting was held on Dec. 5, 1894. Stanford Professor E. A. Ross gave a prophetic talk on the "woman question."

"One of the primary rights of women is the right not to marry," he said, according to the minutes of that meeting. "It used to be the case that to marry was the only way for a woman to earn her living. But if she has the right not to marry unless she wants to she must also have the right to earn a living, to enter industry. This involves a right . . . to be measured by the same standard as men and to receive equal pay for equal work."

At another meeting, the Rev. Eliza Tupper Wilkes spoke on the role of women's clubs. They were "in no sense an achievement but a prophecy," she said, warning that "the worst use to make of them is as a mutual admiration society." Instead, they should be a place for women to hear about literature, science, and other things outside the home to "brighten the daily routine."■

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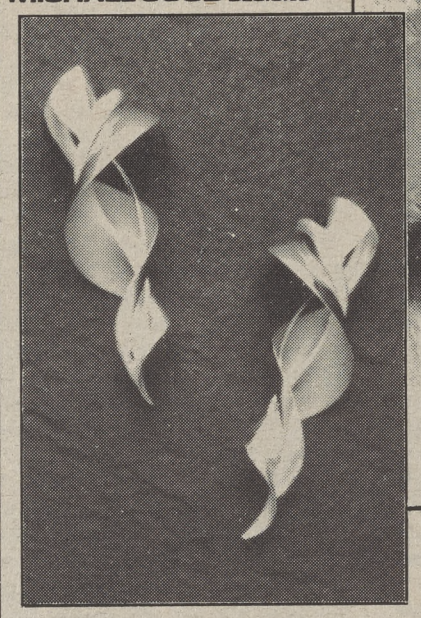

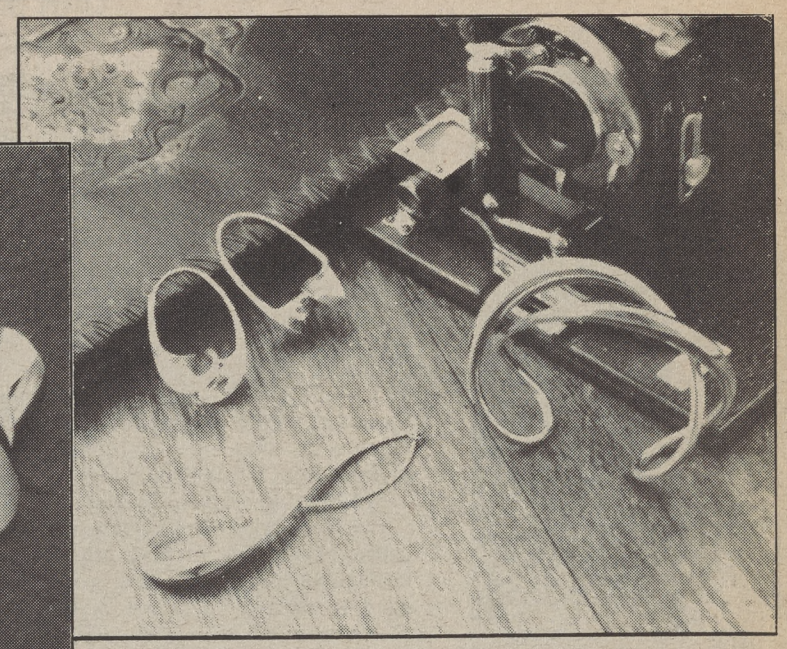

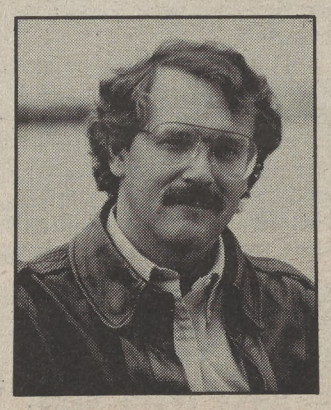

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These hardware and plumbing firms are helping discourage the use of copper-based root control agents, which send significant amounts of toxic copper to San Francisco Bay. Use of these products is illegal in East Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Stanford. Clean Bay Business hardware stores are also distributing literature about proper use and disposal of other products that they sell.

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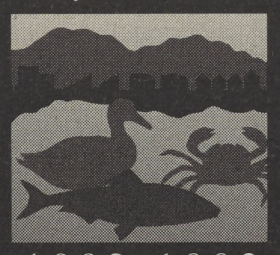

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The City of Palo Alto operates the Regional Water Quality Control Plant for the communities of East Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, and Stanford

Book Talk

BOOK LOOKING . . . Book lovers may be interested in an exhibit that recently opened at Green Library at Stanford. "Moderns: The Annette Campbell-White Collection" is the product of 20 years of collecting first editions and rare books. One highlight is an author-autographed copy of "The Bridge" by **Hart Crane.** For library hours, call 723-0932.

BATTLING BOOKSTORES . . . Strong independent bookstores like **Kepler's** in Menlo Park and **Printers Inc.** in Palo Alto have long defeated attempts by chain booksellers to make local inroads. Now Kepler's is about to take another bite out of the biggies. The store will open an annex around mid-April to sell remainders and publisher overstocks at bargain prices. The annex will be located just a few doors down from the El Camino Real bookstore.

SMART WRITING . . . Aspiring writers or just fans may be interested in the fifth annual **Jack London Writers' Conference** March 13 at the College of Notre Dame in Belmont. **Muriel James, Herbert Crowder, Phyllis Taylor Pianka** and **Gus Lee** are among the featured writers. For information, call 593-2054.

FREE MONEY . . . The **Northern California Book Publicists Association** is offering a $1,000 scholarship for attending classes in publishing and marketing. For application forms, write NCBPA/Carol C. Butterfield Scholarship, P.O. Box 11316, Berkeley, CA 94701 and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

OF LOCAL NOTE . . . Books by local authors just out include "Love and Graduation," a collection of stories of coming of age and maturing by Palo Alto writer **Shirley (Bobbie) Bollock.** "Wind River," a first novel by **Rand Newman** of Boulder Creek, is a murder mystery set on an Indian reservation. Local science fiction favorite **Tad Williams** has his new book out, "To the Green Angel Tower."

ALSO OF NOTE . . . William Haywood Henderson, a former Stegner fellow at Stanford, has published his first novel, "Native," a story set on a Western ranch. Local readers may remember **John L. Wasserman,** a San Francisco Chronicle writer for 15 years until his tragic death in a car accident in 1979. A collection of his writings has just been published by his sister, **Abby Wasserman.** The book is "Praise, Vilification and Sexual Innuendo.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR . . . Authors of note appearing locally in March for readings or signings include Stanford's **Diane Middlebrook** at Kepler's March 10 to discuss her Anne Sexton biography. Former Stegner fellow **Robert Stone** appears at Kepler's March 19 to read from his novel "Outerbridge Reach." And Palo Altan **Al Young** will read from his "Heaven: Collected Poems 1956-1990" March 31. At Printers Inc., opera writer **Wayne Koestenbaum** appears March 9 to talk about "The Queen's Throat." **Kathryn Harrison** appears March 16 to read from her mystery "Exposure." All events at 7:30 p.m. And on March 20 at 11 a.m., students from **Stanford Middle School** in Palo Alto will read their poetry.

Items for Book Talk, including news of local authors or events of interest to local book fans, may be sent to Don Kazak, Title Pages editor, Palo Alto Weekly, P.O. Box 1610, Palo Alto, CA 94302, by the last Wednesday of each month.

Title Pages

A monthly section on local books and authors, edited by Don Kazak

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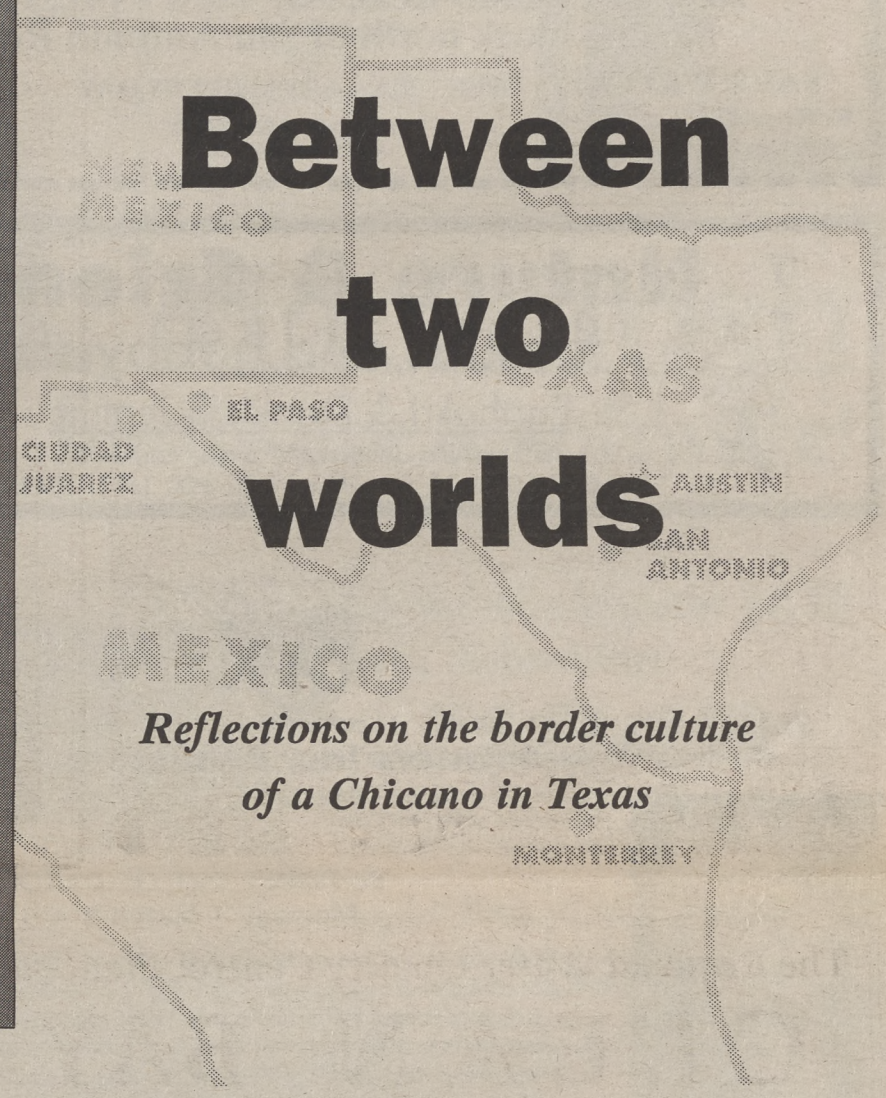


Between two worlds

Reflections on the border culture of a Chicano in Texas

by Don Kazak

Drink Cultura: Chicanismo, *by Jose Antonio Burciaga; Capra Press; 145 pp; $10.95 paper*

I still have one of my favorite editorial cartoons from recent years posted at my desk. Published when the English language measure was on the ballot, it depicts a drawing of California with the familiar Spanish place names replaced by their English translations.

The cities of Tall Tree, St. Francis and Sacrament are labeled, along with Bishop St. Louis, with the Peaceful Ocean to the left and the Snowy Mountain Range to the right. It still is worth a good chuckle, and some thought.

It's the height of cultural chauvinism to ignore the state's heritage, or the heritage of the people who were here before the gold rush of 1849 and the war between the United States and Mexico which made California the 31st state in the union.

That, intentionally or not, is one of the messages which comes through from "Drink Cultura," a slim volume of essays by Jose Antonio Burciaga that are both autobiographical and funny in a sometimes not-so-funny kind of way.

Burciaga is a resident fellow at Stanford, an artist, award-winning poet for "Culture Clash" and husband of Cecilia Burciaga, an associate dean. Both are well-known among Chicanos on campus from their longtime residence at Casa Zapata, the Latino theme house.

He writes from his roots of growing up in El Paso, an American with Mexican relatives and a pull in both directions, a Chicano.

It's the same territory mined by other Chicano writers, notably the late Arturo Islas, a Stanford professor and fiction writer. Islas wrote of Burciaga: "He is a true comic because that we laugh the hardest when we are in pain."

"Drink Cultura" isn't a polemic, but the anger is there, plainly, beneath the observations, the little bits of history and the personal recollections of what it means to be part of two cultures and not entirely accepted by either.

As such, the book is full of small and not-so-small revelations of the food-for-thought variety, just like that editorial cartoon, complete with the chuckle.

Burciaga off-handedly tells the story of poinsettias, the Christmas flowers that herald the holiday season in many of our homes and offices. The flower is *la Cuetlaxochitl*, named by the Aztecs, representing the blood of sacrifice.

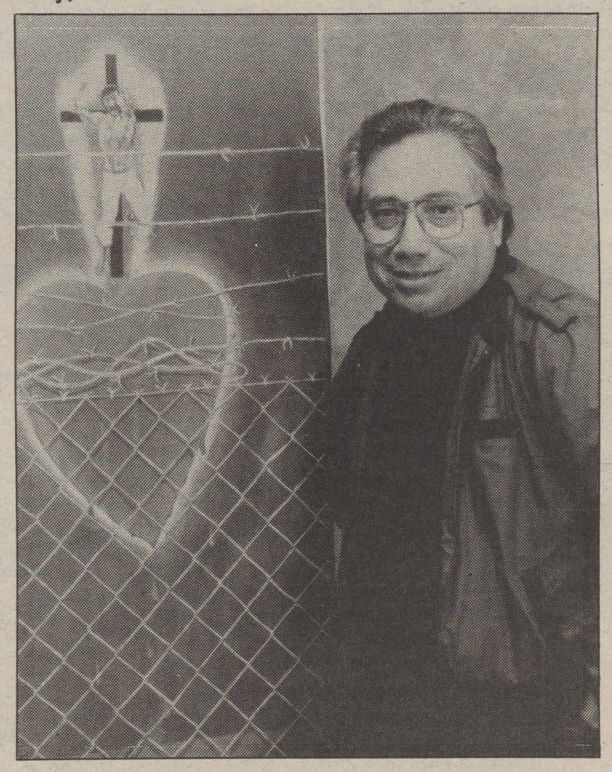
On Christmas Day, 1825, the United States ambassador to Mexico, Joel Robert Poinsett, visited a church where Fransciscans had decorated the nativity scene with the colorful flowers. He brought them back to his native South Carolina, cultivated them, and now we have poinsettias as part of our Christmas celebration.

That underscores the cross-fertilization of cultures: The Aztec through the Spanish by way of the Catholic Church, and the American by the Mexican by way of Taco Bell, to which Burciaga devotes a chapter.

Indeed, the quotation Burciaga chose to place before his text is from Jamake Highwater: "The greatest distance between people is not space but culture."

The story of cultural assimilation or defeat—the difference is a debatable one which Burciaga rightly points out—is far from over. The struggles of indigenous peoples in South and Central America to retain their cultures are still going on in Guatemala and among the Guarani in Paraguay, to name just two examples.

(continued on page 39)



Jose Burciaga often sees the humorous side of being part of a culture that is between two worlds.

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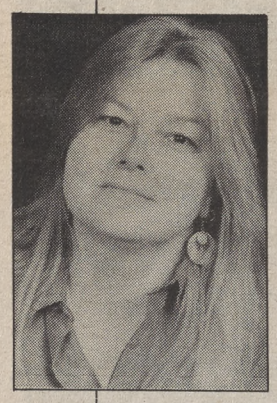
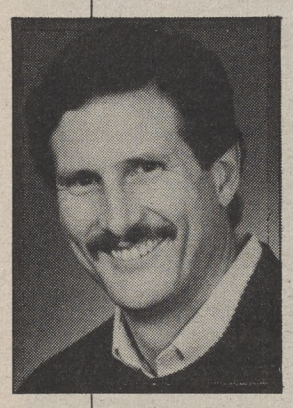


Dorothy Allison
BASTARD OUT OF CAROLINA
Monday ▪ March 8 ▪ 8 PM

Nominated for the National Book Award for Fiction, Dorothy Allison's first novel is the powerful story of a young woman growing up in Greenville County, South Carolina. Ruth Anne Boatwright sees the legacy of poverty and futility that marks her family's place in this small Southern town—the fierce pride that erupts in rage and violence; the women who ward off loneliness by having more children—and she dreams of a better life, the kind of life she finds in books and songs. Written in a mesmerizing voice, Bastard Out of Carolina marks the emergence of an extraordinarily gifted writer.

Wayne Koestenbaum
THE QUEEN'S THROAT
Tuesday ▪ March 9 ▪ 8 PM

In this passionate love letter to opera, Wayne Koestenbaum opens the closet and shows how various and complex are the threads linking opera and homosexuality, examining such diverse phenomena as manners, camp, spectacle, glamour, gossip, privacy, coming out, and the impact of AIDS on the figure of the opera queen. "A brilliant book—an ecstatic book—inevitably, an elegiac book. And one which—like some operas, certain voices—has the capacity to provoke—in this reader and opera-lover, anyway—admiration, rapture, identification"—Susan Sontag



Rand Newman
WIND RIVER
Wednesday ▪ March 10 ▪ 8 PM

A mystery in the tradition of Tony Hillerman, Wind River is the story of Jesse Echohawk, a Shoshone Indian and Deputy Sheriff, who must solve the murder of a U.S. Senatorial candidate. Set on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, Rand Newman's first novel is a tale of politics, ecology, and passion. Rand Newman is a Regional Counsel for Hewlett-Packard.
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Between two worlds

(continued from page 37)

For Burciaga, the cultural differences are as much between Chicanos and Mexicans as between Chicanos and whites, with some Texas-California confusion thrown in as well (his wife is from California).

On visiting Mexico City, he writes:

> On the sidewalks of the wide *avenidas*, on the narrow side streets and in the Metro subway of the biggest city on earth, 500 years after the conquest, I can still distinguish the Criollos from the Indios and the Mestizos. Not many Mexicanos make that distinction any more. Many white Euro-Mexicanos will shrug their shoulders, declare that they are 100 percent Mexican.

And he writes that he has been continually questioned, when in Mexico, about what is a Chicano. It is a term he prefers to the more mainstream "Hispanic" designation which "negates our Indian heritage. Our ancestors were not only the conquistadores but also the conquered."

The idea of one's cultural identity has more to do than simply where one is born or what language is spoken. The confusion of growing up Tex-Mex is balanced by the richness of the cultural wells that can be dipped into, depending on one's perspective.

Burciaga dipped into a a few of those wells.

He tells a wonderful story of growing up in El Paso in the basement of a Jewish synagogue, where his father was the custodian. They were Catholics, of course, but his father would also polish the menorah at Hanukkah. Flowers from a Jewish wedding celebration would later decorate a Catholic altar:

> It was not uncommon to come home from school at lunch time and find an uncle priest, an aunt nun and a Baptist minister visiting our home at the same time that the Rabbi would knock on the door. It was just as natural to find the president of B'Nai Zion eating beans and tortillas in our kitchen.

"Our ancestors were not only the conquistadores but also the conquered."

Since we have just finished Black History Month, it can also be pointed out that people who revere the memories of Martin Luther King or Malcolm X also have good reason to celebrate Cinco de Mayo, the Mexican holiday, but you'll have to read the book to find that one out.

If the greatest distance between peoples is culture, the bridge between cultures is something that can be best crossed one person at a time, as Burciaga has shown in "Drink Cultura." ■

NEW & RECOMMENDED

New releases for 1993 are starting to come into local bookstores. Karen Pennington, book buyer at Kepler's, and Gerry Masteller, book buyer at Printers Inc., cite the following titles as worthy of note:

"Assembling California" by John McPhee is the acclaimed New Yorker writer's fifth in a series of regional geologies. Many consider him among the best non-fiction writers in the business.

"Fool's Gold" by Andrew Bard Schmookler describes how consumerism has reduced everything to commodities and generally devalued more important things.

"Collected Early Poems, 1950-1970" by Adrienne Rich is a noteworthy volume from Rich, a radical feminist and major force in poetry, who teaches at Stanford.

"Haunts of the Black Masseur: The Swimmer as Hero" by Charles Spawson explores the meaning of swimming and the importance different cultures have attached to it.

"The Children of Men" by P.D. James is a departure for the popular mystery writer. This is a novel set in the future, 25 years after the last live birth on Earth, following an incident when all the men go simultaneously infertile.

"Why Is This Country Dancing?" by John Krich is billed as a "one-man samba to the beat of Brazil."

"Long Quiet Highway: Waking Up in America" by Natalie Goldberg is the author's personal account of maturing, with a Zen perspective.

"Sleeping on a Wire: Conversations with Palestinians in Israel" by David Grossman is a close look at the 18 percent of Israeli citizens who are Arabs, and the search for new solution to the Palestinian question.

"Eight Little Piggies" by Stephen Jay Gould is the latest collection of essays from the always popular science writer.

Joseph Banks: A Life" by Patrick O'Brian is a biography of the naturalist and explorer. The author also has written a series of novels on the British navy during the Napoleonic wars.

"Life and Memory of It" by Brett C. Millier is a biography of the poet Elizabeth Bishop that helps place her work in the context of her life. Bishop was a Pulitzer Prize winner.

"The Law of White Spaces" by Giorgio Pressburger is a collection of three fiction stories with the tone of the offerings of Oliver Sacks.

—Don Kazak

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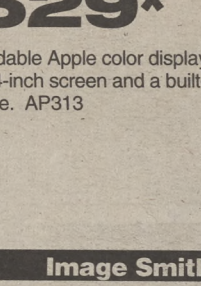

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